

Week Ending Friday, December 2, 1994

**Remarks at the State Dinner for
President Leonid Kuchma of
Ukraine**

November 22, 1994

Ladies and gentlemen, President Kuchma, Mrs. Kuchma, members of the Ukrainian delegation, diplomatic corps, Ukrainian-Americans, and distinguished guests, tonight we meet to celebrate a new friendship between our two nations and a new freedom for the people of the Ukraine. We also celebrate our peoples' devotion to the shared values that produce peace and prosperity. In a time when it is tempting to take the easy way out, Ukraine has set for itself the highest goals.

Mr. President, people around the world admire you for your wisdom in leading your country toward a non-nuclear future, a move now heralded around the world. And we applaud your courage on embarking on the difficult path of economic reform, a path that holds the promise of turning the vast resources of your country into real prosperity. As you strive to build a peaceful and prosperous Ukraine, we will stand by you and work with you.

The Slavic root of the name Ukraine means "borderland," but the independent Ukraine of today is at the very heart of Europe. It occupies a central place in our world. Our freedom and your freedom are bound together. We share the same desire to build a safer and better world for our children.

Mr. President, you are renowned as the man who ran Pivdenmash, the largest aerospace plant in the world. Just as you brought that vast operation to the pinnacle of technical excellence, we know you will be able to bring the hard work of reform down to Earth and that you will deploy all your engineering skill to the construction of a new democratic nation. I might also add that a democratic Ukraine supports the idea of a

democratic Russia, which is best for Russia, Ukraine, and the United States.

Let me close with a story. More than a century ago in the winter of 1858, the great Ukrainian national poet, Taras Shevchenko, had just returned to St. Petersburg from internal exile in the Russian Far East. There he met the acclaimed American black actor, Ira Aldridge, who was in the city performing Shakespeare. The son of Ukrainian serfs and the son of American slaves became fast friends. Theirs was a friendship born of shared ideals, above all the dream of freedom for all peoples. It was that dream that led Shevchenko to condemn despotism with the line, "Freedom knows no dying." Ira Aldridge was so impressed by his friend Shevchenko that it was said of him that forever after he carried Ukraine in his heart.

The steadfast devotion to freedom that brought Shevchenko and Aldridge together has also brought us together tonight. So I ask all of you to join me in a toast to President and Mrs. Kuchma, to the growing friendship of our peoples, and the bright future of a prosperous and free Ukraine.

NOTE: The President spoke at 8:28 p.m. in the State Dining Room at the White House. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks. This item was not received in time for publication in the appropriate issue.

The President's Radio Address

November 26, 1994

Good morning, and a happy Thanksgiving weekend to all of you. To the millions of Americans who have traveled to be with loved ones during this special time of year, I wish you a safe and peaceful journey home. We Americans have a lot to be thankful for this Thanksgiving.

On behalf of all of our citizens, I want to begin by thanking our brave service men and women who are so many miles from home